

# 2013

## Collections and Procurement Department Business Plan



City of Sugar Land

## COLLECTIONS AND PROCUREMENT DEPARTMENT BUSINESS PLAN

### CONTENTS

Organizational & Functional Structure .....	4
Municipal Court-1350 .....	6
Program Summary .....	6
Services and Service Levels .....	6
Service: Customer Service Coordination .....	6
Service: Arraignments and Trials.....	9
Service: Photo Enforcement Appeals.....	12
Service: Magistrate.....	13
Service: Warrants.....	14
Service: Reporting.....	15
Service: Community Service .....	15
Service Level Expectations .....	16
Purchasing-1316 .....	19
Program Summary .....	19
Services and Service Levels .....	19
Service: Competitive Purchasing Oversight .....	19
Service: Surplus/Salvage City Auction Management .....	24
Service: Training and Education .....	24
Service: Emergency Management/Logistics Section Chief.....	24
Service Level Expectations .....	25
Treasury-5020 .....	26
Program Summary .....	26
Services and Service Levels .....	27
Service: Investments.....	27
Service: Property Tax .....	27
Service: Customer Service Coordination .....	27
Service: Billing.....	28

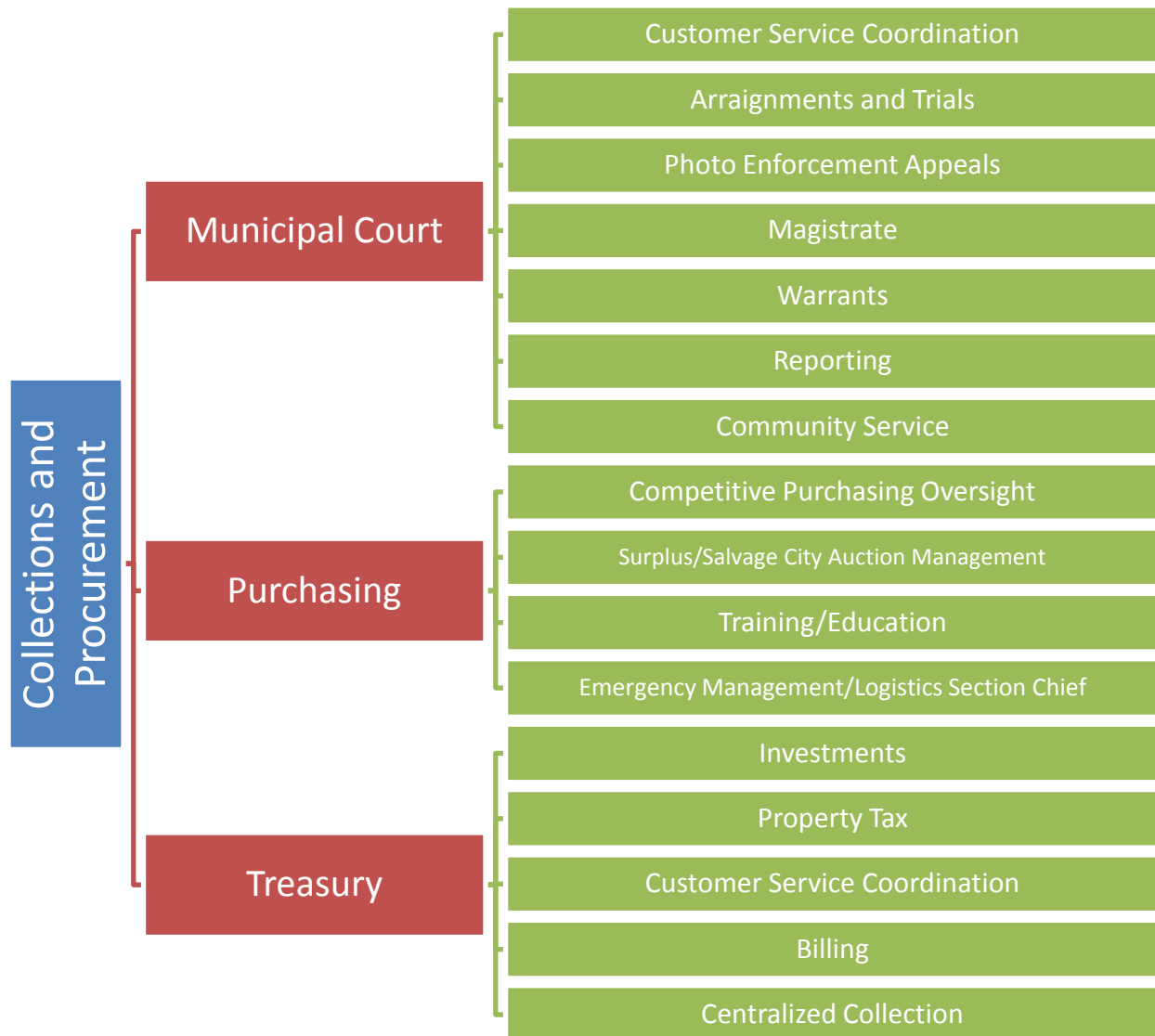
Service: Centralized Collections ..... 30

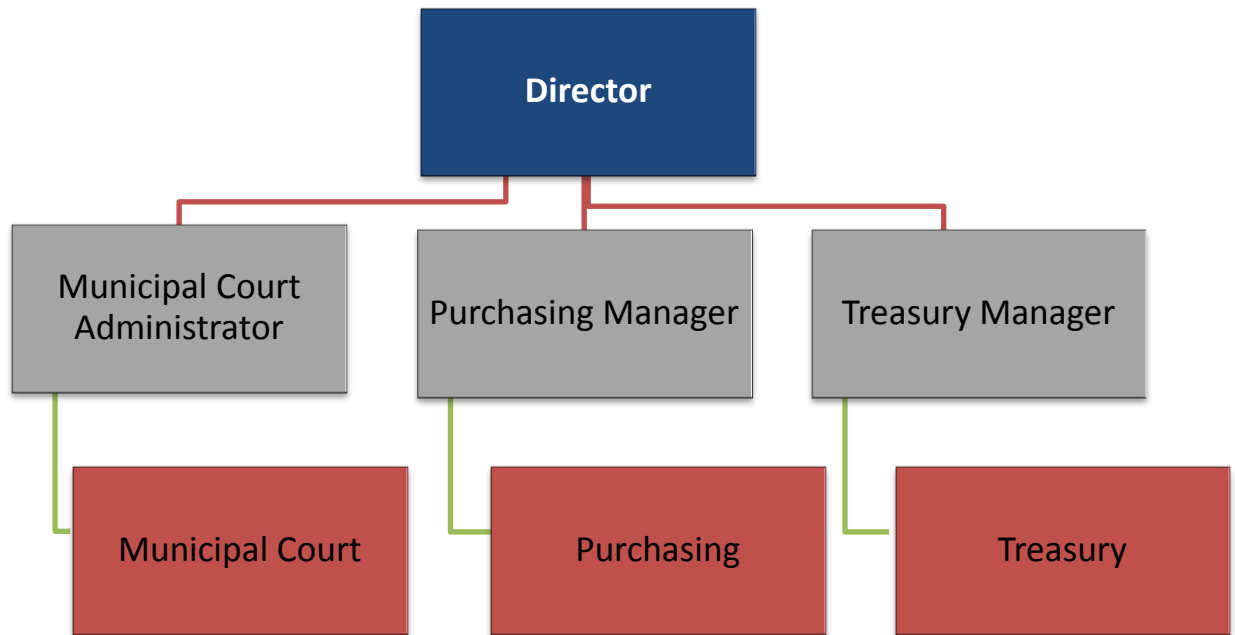
Service Level Expectations ..... 32

# COLLECTIONS & PROCUREMENT DEPARTMENT

## 2013 BUSINESS PLAN

### ORGANIZATIONAL & FUNCTIONAL STRUCTURE





## 2013 PROGRAM OF SERVICES

### MUNICIPAL COURT-1350

#### PROGRAM SUMMARY

The Municipal Court is the judicial branch of municipal government. It must remain neutral in the adjudication of all cases. It is the responsibility of the court to provide courteous services to citizens in the disposition of cases, to be timely and efficient and to operate in accordance with applicable state statutes. The Court is limited to citations for Class “C” misdemeanors issued by officers of the City of Sugar Land Police Department (SLPD). Cases for city ordinance infractions are also entered in to the court by Animal Control Officers and City Inspection, Code Enforcement, Building Officials. The court also has jurisdiction over any state law violations punishable by fine only, such as theft of property valued under \$50.00, and public intoxication.

The Municipal Court is staffed by 11 full-time and 2 part-time employees and has an operating budget of \$851,000. The court also has a Court Security Fund and a Court Technology Fund. The Municipal Judge is included in the full-time category. The court also has 4 associate judges that report to the Municipal Judge. The part-time employees are the Community Service Worker Coordinator employee and the Records Clerk. The program has no special vehicles, equipment or special resources beyond specialized software.

In FY 2010, the court experienced an increase (over 100%) in jury trials which set forth developments necessary for the due process requirements of the U.S. Constitution, Texas Constitution, and Code of Criminal Procedure. The court recognized the community’s on-going need of preserving a citizen’s right to a jury trial and enhancing juror participation. Improvements included the furnishing of space as a second courtroom, construction of 50 additional parking spaces, and new signage in the court entrance lobby. All enhancements were applied to meet the growing demand and to dispose court cases accordingly. The addition of the second courtroom now allows jury trials to be conducted by Judges in two courtrooms simultaneously. Changes in court docket management were also implemented in respecting jurors’ time to accommodate trial activity. Complimentary Wi-Fi is also available for jurors

The program operates to meet the City’s mid-term priorities of Responsible City Government through Consistent Financial Policies; A Leader in Customer Service-Superior Service and Easy Access to City Government: Information and Services.

#### SERVICES AND SERVICE LEVELS

##### Service: Customer Service Coordination

The court provides administrative and clerical support for municipal court proceedings. Staff ensures that the court is accessible in terms of hours, openness of proceedings, clarity of procedures and options available, and that the individuals appearing before the court are treated with respect.

The customer service window is the gateway to the municipal court process. Staff is committed to achieving the highest level of customer service by providing accurate information that is communicated in an efficient and effective manner through the integration of people and technology.

The hours of operation are from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday (excluding holidays) to provide assistance to citizens and defendants at the court windows. Arraignments are conducted Tuesday through Friday at 9:00 AM.

The court continues to place emphasis on customer service and works to build public trust in the honesty and fairness of the court. The court conducts systematic reviews of court notices and communications to ensure that the information presented is correct, clear, and understandable. The court also continues to identify and implement process improvements that will allow the court to continue to respond to increased case filings and activity with current staff.

Court administration also maintains regular communication with the Presiding Judge and City Prosecutor regarding court policies and procedures. Expected service level is to promote efficient administration of daily court work flow.

The Municipal Court also collaborates and provides assistance to the Police Department, attorneys, other criminal justice agencies and courts.

The public also has access to an AT&T language line, by offering languages for the courtroom, jail and clerks. Licensed certified interpreters in Spanish and Vietnamese are also available.

Other means of customer service, aside from in-person, are the court brochures, Interactive Voice Response (IVR) and the city's website.

**Court Brochure**-The court provides the police department with a yearly supply of 25,000 court brochures titled, "Taking Care of Your Ticket" that is given to the individual, by a police officer, during a traffic stop. The brochure is also available on the City's website and in the Court lobby. The brochure details court options allowing the defendant to choose a method that would prevent the violation from being recorded on their state driving record. The information outlined in the brochure include the options of taking a driving safety course (DSC), requesting deferred disposition (probation), requesting a 30-day extension of time to pay, or simply paying the full amount of the fine. The brochure offers the defendant a convenient method in taking care of their ticket by completing an option form and mailing it to the court without making a court appearance. Daily, court clerks process the brochures forms received for managing the case for a resolution, such as DSC, Deferred Disposition or to pay the fine. In FY 2011 out of the 23,890 violations issued by SLPD, the court received 3.05% of responses through use of the court brochure. The court anticipates an increase in response through on-going improvements to the court's website highlighting the court brochure. (See Appendix for a copy of the brochure)

**Interactive Voice Response (IVR) & Website**-The court clerks at the customer service window, along with staff handling telephone inquiries, are responsible for communicating accurate and timely court program information for payment processing, available case dismissal options along with other pertinent information to fulfill requirements.

In addition to these customer service options, the court has identified process and technological improvements that have aided in improving access to case information, reducing waiting time, alleviating congestion in the court lobby, and improving payment processes. These tools are the

Interactive Voice Response System (IVR) and the City of Sugar Land website. The IVR is an automated phone service that provides the defendant the option to make payments over the phone 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The website offers defendants the opportunity to make payments via the internet through a third party vendor called Official payments. In FY 2011, there was an increase in defendants' use of the automated phone system by 56%, and internet payment increased by 23%. The court expects to see an increase in internet payments with the implementation of a new module/web piece to the court's existing software system in FY 2013.

The court continues to place emphasis on customer satisfaction and works to build public trust in the honesty and fairness of the court. The court conducts systematic reviews of court notices and communications to ensure that the information presented is correct, clear, and understandable. The court also continues to identify and implement process improvements that will allow the court to continue to respond to increased case filings and activity with current staff.

Court administration also maintains regular communication with the Presiding Judge and City Prosecutor regarding court policies and procedures. Expected service level is to promote efficient administration of daily court work flow.

### **Activity: Collection**

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The Court properly identifies, includes, and records the State-required court costs for each offense and case. Collections of fines are made via mail, online, phone and in-person. Cash receipts are balanced and a reconciliation of fine amounts is calculated monthly. Funds are deposited daily to the city's deposited bank by way of armored car service.

Close-out commences at 3PM daily by the assigned court clerk who prepares close-out cash procedures including a court daily cash collection register of funds collected. Total collections for all court clerks, including jail receipts from the Warrant Coordinator are balanced and prepared for bank deposit. Through an interface between the court's case management system and the Accounting Department's financial system, all monies collected are posted to the General Ledger.

### **Activity: Judicial Records**

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At times, the court is asked to provide judicial records by the public. The court promptly complies with these requests by providing these documents within ten (10) business days as required by state law for non-bulk requests.

Recently, court records costs were adopted for paper copies of municipal court records, electronic compilation and distribution of court records (each report) and court records on storage mediums, such as flash drive, compact discs, etc.

Court case records are maintained according to the state records retention schedule governing judicial records. Closed cases are filed in numerical order according to the cause number and stored in the file room. Court personnel routinely monitor file room space and older cases are stored in boxes and identified for archiving. Each year those records that qualify for destruction are identified and destroyed in accordance with state law. A document indicating records destroyed and date of such action is maintained.



Municipal Court, along with the IT Department, is working on identifying the proper software needed to help with document management and daily case flow management. This software will also assist with the ability to locate files quickly for records request and retention and needs by the court.

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### **Service: Arraignments and Trials**

Arraignments (defendant's initial court appearance) are held Tuesday through Friday at 9:00 AM. For cases that are not disposed of prior to an arraignment, pre-trials and trials are set accordingly. Pre-trial hearings are held on the second, third, and fourth Tuesday of each month. Jury trials are held on the second, third and fourth Wednesday each month. Judge/bench trials are held on the second, third, and fourth Thursday of each month. Property hearings, indigent hearings and animal hearings are also scheduled as required.

On the third Monday of each month, the court provides Juvenile docket night, which opens from 5:00 PM until the hearings are completed.

On the first Tuesday of each month, the Court schedules appeal hearings for citizens charged with civil violations stemming from the Police Department's Photo Enforcement Program (red light camera tickets).

Court appearances made by citizens have steadily increased in recent years. A normal docket for any arraignment day could include up to 85 cases/60 defendants. The court clerks at the customer service window are in constant communication with the Docket Coordinator and/or the Court Services Specialist in preparing the arraignment docket. To minimize the amount of traffic entering the courtroom, the clerks have been trained to thoroughly explain, clarify and educate the defendants of available options. This refers back to the case management/customer service coordination section mentioned above. The majority of the cases involve speeding offenses, therefore the option of taking a driving safety course, is the best method in taking care of the citation. If the defendant has already taken a driving safety course and commits another traffic offense, the option of requesting deferred disposition is the next available option. For those violations involving insurance/inspection/registration requirements, there are automatic dismissal options that are also available to the driving public. These court options are consistently communicated so that defendants understand most cases can be handled without a court appearance. With the exception of juveniles who must appear in person, with a parent or legal guardian, most traffic violations can be handled without a court appearance.

**Court Docket Coordinator**- At the time of arraignment, the judge authorizes the docket coordinator working in the courtroom to prepare court documents. The docket coordinator maintains calendars for scheduling pre-trial hearings, jury trials and trials by judge. The docket coordinator is responsible for preparing the docket and entering all judgments into the Incode system. The judge works with the docket coordinator and the prosecutor to determine the need for any additional dockets and to make sure the cases filed are concluded within a reasonable time (the target is trial within 90 days from plea of not guilty). The docket coordinator posts all dockets on the court's website daily. The coordinator prepares affidavits, subpoenas police officers and prepares the summons for prospective jurors and maintains the prospective juror list.

If the defendant is not satisfied with the judgment of the court or verdict of the jury, he or she may appeal his or her case or request a new trial. The Docket Coordinator provides information (rules of the court) for filing an appeal.

### **Activity: Pre-Trials**

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Pre-Trials are provided to timely offer access to defendants and their attorneys or pro se defendants who are scheduled to see the Prosecutor and appear before the Judge for case documentation and problem solving information services.

Pre-trials are conducted on a first come, first serve basis and are held every second, third, and fourth Tuesday of the month at 1:30 p.m. in the main courtroom. The majority of cases set for jury trial go through a pre-trial first. Depending on the volume of contested cases pre-trial dockets may also be scheduled for one full Monday per month. During a defendant's initial court appearance (arraignment) a jury trial or trial by Judge may be scheduled without a pre-trial depending on the circumstances of the case. Pre-trial hearings provide an effective means of caseflow management because they handle the defendant's challenges to the charges filed; dispose of issues that do not relate to the merits of the case; and assure in advance that the time set for disposition of non-contested cases will not be taken up by other matters.

On any given arraignment date all of these hearings are pre-determined for scheduling. Typically, pre-trial hearings are scheduled two to three (2-3) weeks in advance to allow attorneys to file motions at least seven (7) days prior to the date of the pre-trial hearing and also allows defendant sufficient notice to allow him or her at least ten (10) days in which to raise or file preliminary matters. Once the Docket Coordinator assigns a pre-trial hearing date, the re-set form is generated and signed by Judge or the Docket Coordinator and defendant. The Docket Coordinator provides copy of re-set form to defendant, which serves as notice of scheduled pre-trial date and time. At any given point of time during arraignments, the Docket Coordinator sends completed case files through the document delivery system for the court clerks stationed in the court office/window to receive and designate for processing and filing in the appropriate docket.

In advance of pre-trial hearings, the Court Services Specialist coordinates with the Docket Coordinator in identifying cases set for pre-trial that include audio and video evidence by Sugar Land Police.

Pre-trial hearings are also referred to as attorney dockets. The attorneys work to bargain an agreement with the prosecutor, therefore during pre-trial hearings, there is a lot of communication between the attorney and the prosecutor. Consequently, the attorney takes the agreement to their client/defendant and re-consults with the prosecutor multiple times, in reaching an agreement and presenting it before the Judge. In the event no agreement is reached, the defendant is entitled to select a jury trial or trial by Judge for case resolution. Pre-trials also determine matters such as problems related to the complaint on case file; motions for continuance; motions to suppress evidence; motions for discovery-used to obtain facts and information about the case; and motion for appointment of an interpreter.

### **Activity: Jury Trials**

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The 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Amendments of the U.S. Constitution guarantee the right to trial by jury. The Texas Constitution likewise states that in all criminal prosecution in Texas the accused has a right to a jury trial.

The right to a jury trial is absolute, and if a defendant does not want a jury trial, he or she must waive that right. Since municipal courts were established by the Legislature to have criminal jurisdiction, defendants have a right to a jury trial.

Jury Trials are held on the second, third, and fourth Wednesday of the month at 1:00 pm. The Judge is responsible for maintaining court calendars in setting out all the trial dockets for at least three month in advance. The Docket Coordinator is responsible for preparing jury trial dockets.

After the jury trial verdict is announced, the Judge renders a judgment. If the decision of the jury is not guilty, the Judge enters a finding of not guilty, dismisses the case, and releases the defendant from all liability. If a jury fails to agree to a verdict after being kept together for a reasonable amount of time, then a mistrial occurs. The case may be tried again as soon as practicable. All judgments and final orders of the Judge are rendered in open court. When jury trials proceed past normal business hours and the window is closed, the Docket Coordinator mails notice of fine and court costs due. If the defendant fails to pay the fine and court costs, a *capias pro fine* warrant is issued. Lastly, the Judge dismisses the jury panel and thanks them for their service and reminds them to acquire excuse letters if needed.

If the defendant is not satisfied with the judgment of the court or verdict of the jury, he or she may appeal his or her case or request a new trial. The Docket Coordinator provides information (rules of the court) for filing an appeal.

### **Activity: Juror Summons Process**

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**Juror Summons** - In preparing for summoning prospective jurors, the Docket Coordinator prepares a writ of venire (order from Judge to clerk to summon prospective jurors) for the Judges approval. After written approval, the jurors are randomly selected. To be eligible to serve on a municipal court jury, a person must be a resident of the municipality for which the court is established. The juror summonses are mailed three (3) weeks before the trial date. The prospective juror may fax, mail, or go online to the court's website to claim an exemption for jury service. All of the exemptions are received and date stamped by the Court Secretary who works closely with the Court Services Specialist in ensuring all exemptions are recorded.

A jury trial docket may contain up to 6 cases with equal number of defendants/trials. On jury trial days, the court staff prepares for walk-in traffic, particularly citizens summoned for jury service. Two to three CAST volunteers assist the court staff in directing people in the lobby.

### **Activity: Trials by Judge/Bench Trials**

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Trials offer access to defendants and their attorneys or pro se defendants who are scheduled to have a fair, accurate, and efficient trial by Judge in accordance with law in which a fine may be imposed.

Bench trials are scheduled on Thursdays at 1:00 pm as needed. The Judge works with the Docket Coordinator in maintaining a calendar for scheduling bench trials. Generally, the overall process for Judge trials is similar to jury trials. The biggest difference is that in a trial before the Judge, the Judge hears the evidence and decides whether the defendant is guilty or not guilty based solely upon the evidence presented at trial.

A typical bench trial docket may include up to ten (10) cases, with equal number of defendants/trials. Bench trials run much quicker than jury trials, however are not as popular as jury trials with defendants appearing in Sugar Land Municipal Court. Bench trials normally end by 5:00 pm.

### **Activity: Juvenile Night Court**

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State law defines juveniles as those persons who are at least 10 years old but under 17 years old charged with criminal offenses. More serious infractions by juveniles are handled confidentially rather than in open court; however, this practice may be waived by the juvenile upon request. Parents or legal guardians of juveniles who are defendants in the Sugar Land Municipal Court are required to be present during all proceedings with the juvenile.

Juvenile Night Court Juvenile court is held the third Monday of each month at 5 p.m. to accommodate both the schedules for the parents as well as students. Juveniles can also attend court Tuesday thru Friday, during arraignments. In FY12, the number of juvenile defendants YTD is 107. If a holiday falls on the third Monday of the month, juvenile court is scheduled for the following Monday.

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### **Service: Photo Enforcement Appeals**

Safe Light Sugar Land/Red Light Cameras is a SLPD public safety initiative. Municipal Court's role is to provide the appeal process for defendants who are charged with the civil offense of running a red light at intersections that have cameras documenting the violation.

The owner of a vehicle photographed running a red light will be subject to a \$75 fine per the Code of Ordinance, Article V, Sec 5-158. Notices with an image of the violation are mailed to the owner of the vehicle within 30 days of the red light offense. The Notice of Violation contains images of the violating vehicle before it enters the intersection, while it is in the intersection and of the license plate. Payment options will be included, as well as instructions to appeal the violation through an administrative hearing.

Per the Code of Ordinance, Article V, Sec. 5-161, The owner of a motor vehicle may contest the imposition of the civil penalty by filing a written request for an administrative adjudication hearing within 30 days from the date the notice of violation was mailed. The administrative adjudication hearing will be held within 30 days of the date the hearing was requested. The City Council will appoint an administrative adjudication hearing officer or officers to preside over the administrative adjudication hearing. The hearing officers have the authority to administer oaths and issue orders compelling the attendance of witnesses and the production of documents.

Red light camera administrative hearings are held every Monday at 9:00 AM and the Police Department provides staff to present video evidence to defendants. These hearings are scheduled through the Police Department. Municipal Court provides the location for these hearings to be held. Defendants appearing for these hearings do not check in the court window, rather they sign in and are directed to have a seat in the lobby and wait for their name to be called by an officer.

In the event the defendant is not satisfied with the finding of liability at the hearing, they are instructed to schedule an appeal hearing with Municipal Court. This service is provided at the court window only. The defendant will file a Notice of Appeal Petition and the court clerk will provide them a copy of this

petition indicating the next scheduled date for appeal hearings in the court. The court clerk goes in the ATSOI software system and enters name of the defendant scheduled to appear for appeal hearing. The Docket Coordinator is responsible for preparing the appeal hearing docket. Photo Enforcement Appeal Hearings are scheduled the first Tuesday of each month at 1:30 PM.

If the Judge finds the defendant liable at the appeals hearing and orders payment of the \$75.00 fee; the Judge informs the defendant that he/she will be receiving a Notice of Determination in the mail that provides instructions for payment. If the Judge finds the defendant not liable of any fees, the Judge informs the defendant that he/she will receive Notice of Determination in the mail indicating no amount is due. The Police Department is also notified of the Judgment.

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### **Service: Magistrate**

Municipal Judges or magistrates are Judges in the municipal court circuit, which is the lowest branch of court in the United States. The Sugar Land Charter, Article 4.06 states that the city council shall appoint the municipal court Judges and one or more associate Judges and the city manager shall appoint the municipal clerk. The specific responsibilities of a magistrate or municipal Judge are primarily presiding over municipal court hearings.

Pursuant to state statute, persons arrested must be arraigned within 48 hours. The presiding Judge arraigns prisoners during normal business hours. After hours arraignment duties are provided by the presiding and associate Judges on a rotating basis according to a monthly schedule generated by the court to ensure arraignment of prisoners by a magistrate. The Judges issue arrest and search warrants, mental health commitment orders, and emergency protective orders. Additionally, the Judges give the statutory juvenile warnings.

The presiding Judge of Sugar Land municipal court has established a policy that any prisoner who is to be seen by a municipal court Judge should be seen within 24 hours of arrest. There is no regularly scheduled jail docket or time that prisoners will be brought before magistrate.

The Judge maintains an on-call calendar for he, as presiding Judge, and four (4) associate Judges to cover seeing prisoners in jail. The on-call calendar is based on a rotation schedule. The Docket Coordinator assists the Judge in printing and distributing the calendar each month.

Each work day, the presiding Judge goes to the jail to see if any prisoners need to be arraigned. On the weekends, persons arrested are processed by PD detention. The Detention Officer will contact the Judge/or associate Judge on call.

When arraigning prisoners, the Judge accepts plea and processes paper work depending on the plea and option to resolve his/her case. The Detention Officer processes credit card payments or cash payments. All of the case paperwork is forwarded to court personnel for further processing. Jail receipts (monies) are processed through the Warrant Coordinator or Court Services Specialist as all arrests are based on outstanding warrants.

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## **Service: Warrants**

Warrant Division to effectively and efficiently enforce court judgments resulting in arrest warrants or capias pro fine warrants. To efficiently coordinate with other courts and/or law enforcement agencies seeking to serve warrants on a person in custody at SLPD. Coordination efforts with other agencies or courts are handled by the Police Department-jailers, officers and dispatch who all have the ability to confirm the validity of the warrant and Patrol Supervisors ability to place holds on individuals in jail when required.

Municipal Judges have authority to issues warrants of arrest for fine-only misdemeanor filed in their court. A “warrant of arrest” is a written order from a Judge directed to a peace officer, commanding the officer to take the body of the person accused of an offense, to be dealt with according to law. Arrest warrants are issued when a defendant fails to appear in court. Capias pro fine warrants are issued when a defendant has entered a plea however defaults on payment of fine and court costs.

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## **Activity: Warrant Activity**

The Court is staffed with one (1) full-time Warrant Coordinator and one (1) full time Court Services Specialist who process warrants on a daily basis. Employed by SLPD are two (2) full time Warrant Officers and one (1) Court Bailiff who service and clear (Class “C” misdemeanor) arrest warrants. Defendants who have failed to appear for their arraignments are provided “pre-warrant” notices by the Warrant Officers via postcard mailings, approximately 5-10 days after their appearance date. Defendants who fail to appear on their assigned court date/arraignment also receive a phone call through the court’s automated outbound call system 7 days after missing their court date, as a reminder that their case may go into warrant status. After 10-15 days have lapsed, the Coordinator processes warrants by assembling warrant documentation for the Presiding Judge’s electronic signature. These warrant cases are then transmitted to the OMNI vendor as part of the DPS Failure to Appear Program and are also forwarded to SLPD where cases are entered into SETCIC (Southeast Texas Crime Information Center database). Warrant Officers generate warrant listings through the court’s case management system, and proceed to mail “warrant notices” via postcards to defendants. Defendants are notified that a warrant has been issued for their arrest, and that additional charges have been added to their original charge. Warrant files are maintained in the court by the Coordinator who maintains record of inactive and active warrants, and works with SLPD Dispatch office to reconcile warrant cases. When warrants are cleared, the Coordinator and/or Court clerk enters information in court system and notifies OMNI and SLPD dispatch of the removal of the warrant. In FY 2011 the court issued 5,427 warrants and cleared 5,684. The court continues to provide assistance, case resolution and payment processing services for non-compliant defendants being held accountable for satisfying court ordered financial obligations.

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## **Activity: Delinquent Collections**

In 2001, the Texas Legislature adopted SB 1778, which amended the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure. The amended law allows the governing body of a municipality that enters into a collection service to authorize the addition of a 30% add-on collection on all adjudicated cases and for unadjudicated cases that occurred after June 18,2003 that are more than 60 days past due and have been referred to the attorney vendor for collection. The City has contracted collection services with the law firm of McCreary, Veselka, Bragg, and Allen (MVBA) of Round Rock, Texas. MVBA provides this service and

works closely with the Court in ensuring full payment of delinquent court fines and fees are collected from defendants in warrant status.

Through an interface between the court's software and MVBA, the Deputy Court Administrator electronically remits a "data file" monthly to MVBA. The data file includes cases that are 90 days past due. MVBA in turn works on contacting defendants for collection. Those defendants in warrant that are arrested by SLPD are processed for jail time and the court magistrates. On a weekly or bi-weekly basis, MVBA remits a check to the Court for full payment of accounts/cases. The court staff enters payment into the court system and processes the warrant for clearance. The Court Administrator closely monitors the collection service by preparing quarterly reports detailing collections for the city's compensation committee.

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### **Service: Reporting**

**Office of Court Administration (OCA)** - Electronically submit an accurate report to State OCA indicating court activity (case load, dispositions, and dismissals) within three (3) business days following the end of each month. Each month required court data is compiled and electronically transmitted to the Texas Judicial Council Office of Court Administration. The OCA report includes number of trials and disposition of cases during the month and is due within 20 days of the end of the month reported.

**Texas Department of Public Safety (TX DPS)** - Electronically submit an accurate report to State DPS indicating all disposed cases with convictions within three (3) business days following the end of each month. Throughout the month reports are electronically submitted to the Department of Public Safety regarding alcohol offenses (minors) and other offenses (conviction reports).

**State Comptroller** - Efficiently submit accurate report of all collected court costs and fees to Accounting Department within three (3) business days following the end of each quarter. Accounting in turn processes payment to State Comptroller within 30 days after the end of each quarter. Efficiently submit accurate report of all collected child safety fees to Accounting Department within three (3) business days following the end of each fiscal year. Accounting in turn processes payment (50% of fees) to State Comptroller within 30 days after the end of each fiscal year.

**COSL Accounting Department** - Efficiently submit accurate reports including Bonds Reconciliation, Distribution of Monies Collected and Deposited to Accounting within three (3) business days following the end of each month. The Court's Cash Report is also provided to Accounting daily.

**Quarterly Report**- A detailed quarterly report is completed of Municipal Court operations to be reviewed with the City Council Compensation Committee. This report includes details of services and any issues that have developed during the quarter. The Municipal Court Judge's performance is also evaluated by the Committee at this time.

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### **Service: Community Service**

**Community Service**- To provide a wide range of resources (approx. 14 approved non-profit agencies) for defendants to perform community service work for case resolution. The list of approved agencies is located on the City's website under municipal Court. Community Service must be performed at one of the organizations on the list. Any other organization must be approved by the Judge before performing



the service. Written requests may be faxed to Municipal Court. Proof of Community Service must be on the organization's letterhead stating number of hours performed. This may be provided in person, mail or fax upon completion.

A part-time Community Service Worker Coordinator works with the defendant (juvenile) to schedule community service and properly document and track the hours performed.

### Activity: COSL Juvenile Program

**COSL Juvenile Program**- Started in October of 2000 on the Public Works complex, a juvenile garden program was established to provide a place for juveniles to perform community service. The garden served as an avenue for juveniles aged 16 and under to learn from their mistakes by performing community service in a field environment. The program was funded with a federal grant from the Texas Office of the Governor's Criminal Justice Division as well as donations. Instead of paying municipal citations for Class C misdemeanor offenses, some juveniles choose to work in the garden. Over time, other Community Service programs have become available. The approved community service list is available on the city's website.

The P/T Community Service Worker Coordinator is responsible for coordinating the community service program, including supervising the youths at the garden and scheduling and interviewing the juveniles and documenting the hours worked. It is the general expectation that the community service be completed within 90 days of being ordered by the Judge. Juveniles are scheduled Saturday mornings 8-12. The position will also assist the court staff with customer service needs, filing and research during the week.

Volunteers from the Fort Bend County Master Gardeners thru a contract provided the garden for the youth to work, and the local garden clubs help the youth in learning how to help tend a garden. Juveniles are scheduled Saturday mornings from 8-12. Volunteers, through the City's Serve Sugar Land program, can also volunteer to help show the juveniles how to garden.

### SERVICE LEVEL EXPECTATIONS

Program: MUNICIPAL COURT	
Service (Activity)	Service Level Expectation
Customer Service Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Provide high quality assistance to citizens and defendants appearing in court, live phone response, via the Internet, or through the automated telephone service 24/7.</li> <li>-To maintain an effective automated phone system that reminds defendants of court dates and pre-warrant status.</li> <li>-To provide a court brochure for use at traffic stops for defendants' convenient use in selecting a court option for case resolution.</li> <li>-Provide timely assistance to law enforcement, attorneys and other criminal justice agencies, or courts.</li> </ul>



<i>Collections</i>	<p>-Provide efficient payment processing services to the general public in a professional and courteous manner through website, automated telephone service, court window, and telephone inquiry responses.</p> <p>-To efficiently and accurately report all monies receipted to Accounting Department each work day beginning at 3PM daily.</p>
<i>Judicial Records</i>	-To promptly comply with citizen's request of judicial records within ten (10) business days.
<b>Arraignments &amp; Trials</b>	<p>-To timely offer access to court at 8:00 am Tuesday through Friday in preparation of checking in all persons by 9:00 am who are making their initial court appearance.</p> <p>-Treat the citizens who appear before court in a courteous and efficient manner and provide fair, impartial, and timely disposition of their cases.</p>
<i>Pre-Trials</i>	<p>-To timely offer access to defendants and their attorneys or pro se defendants who are scheduled to see the Prosecutor and appear before the Judge for case documentation and problem solving information services.</p> <p>-Pre-trials are held every second, third and fourth Tuesday of the month at 1:30PM.</p>
<i>Jury Trials</i>	<p>-To timely offer access to defendants and their attorneys or pro se defendants who are scheduled to have a fair, accurate, and efficient jury trial in accordance with law in which a fine may be imposed.</p> <p>-To provide an adequate and suitable environment for jurors and pay the reasonable fee of \$6 to each juror for their service.</p> <p>-Jury trials are held on the second, third and fourth Wednesday of the month at 1:00PM.</p>
<i>Juror Summons</i>	Juror summonses are mailed three weeks prior to trial date.
<i>Trials by Judge/Bench Trial</i>	<p>-To timely offer access to defendants and their attorneys or pro se defendants who are scheduled to have a fair, accurate, and efficient trial by Judge in accordance with law in which a fine may be imposed.</p> <p>-Bench trials are scheduled on Thursdays at 1:00PM as needed.</p>
<i>Juvenile Night Court</i>	-To schedule hearings and to timely offer access to juveniles who are at least 10 years old but under 17 years old access to night court held at 5 pm on the third Monday of each month.
<b>Photo Enforcement Appeals</b>	-To timely offer access to persons who filed an appeal before the Judge for civil violations related to the red light camera / photo enforcement program the first Tuesday of each month at 1:30 pm., in which a fine may be imposed.

<b>Magistrate</b>	-Strictly adhere to state law that requires arraigning prisoners within 48 hours.
<b>Warrants</b>	-Warrant Division to effectively and efficiently enforce court judgments resulting in arrest warrants or capias pro fine warrants. -To efficiently coordinate with other courts and/or law enforcement agencies seeking to serve warrants on a person in custody at SLPD.
<i>Warrant Activity</i>	-To fully utilize the court's case management system to process, generate and clear all warrants ordered by the Judge complying with established policy and procedures. -To process accurate reconciliation of active and inactive warrants including accurate posting of monies for final disposition of warrant cases.
<i>Delinquent Collections</i>	-To closely coordinate with collection agency in receipting/collecting fines and fees on warrant cases and to remit delinquent cases files electronically within three (3) business days of each month for prompt collections. -To maintain accurate and efficient collection reports as performance measures of collection agency efforts.
<b>Reporting</b>	-Timely submit accurate reports required by the State OCA, State Comptroller, State Department of Public Safety, and Internal Accounting Department.
<b>Community Service</b>	-To provide a wide range of resources (approved non-profit agencies) for defendants to perform community service work for case resolution.
<i>COSL Juvenile Community Program</i>	-To provide a work environment for juveniles aged 16 and under to perform community service allowing flexible work schedules and ultimately providing an avenue for youths to learn from their mistakes.

## PURCHASING-1316

### PROGRAM SUMMARY

The Purchasing Office is staffed by 5.00 full-time positions and has an operating budget of \$376,116. Normal working hours are Monday through Friday from 7:30 AM to 5:30 PM to assist internal and external customers by phone. The program has no special vehicles, equipment or special resources.

The Purchasing Office is an internal service program, and its primary function is to assist other departments with their procurement needs while meeting all applicable legal requirements.

The program operates to meet the City's mid-term priorities of Responsible City Government through Consistent Financial Policies; A Leader in Customer Service-Superior Service and Easy Access to City Government: Information and Services.

### SERVICES AND SERVICE LEVELS

#### Service: Competitive Purchasing Oversight

The Purchasing Office maintains the City's Purchasing Policies. The Purchasing Office oversees the required competitive purchasing process used by departments. The Purchasing Office ensures that departments procure within the limits imposed by law and in accordance with adopted policies and procedures.

Contract Management/Administration is centralized for the City and performs the functions of reviewing bid specifications, preparing bid documents, coordinating required advertising with the City Secretary's office, distributing bid documents to vendors, conducting any pre-bid conferences with the help of the Purchasing Buyers, and overseeing the selection process, including the bid tabulation preparation and scoring.

The Purchasing Office also responds to vendors' inquiries about the City's purchasing and bidding policies and procedures.

The Purchasing Manager reviews and signs off on all agenda items that have an expenditure of funds. Additionally, the Purchasing Office is responsible for the centralized procurement of items such as vehicles and prepares and presents all agenda materials for such purchases.

**Compliance Review**-In an effort to ensure compliance with all procurement related policies procedures; the Purchasing office reviews and approves agendas, contracts, p-card purchases and requisitions. The review is designed to ensure compliance and assist users with processing and purchasing improvements.

The compliance review assesses a department's ability to adhere to statutory and regulatory requirements. This includes adequate documentation that clearly demonstrates sound business judgment was used in the purchasing process and that all of the applicable rules designed to protect the interest of the city are applied.

## Activity: Contract/Bid Oversight

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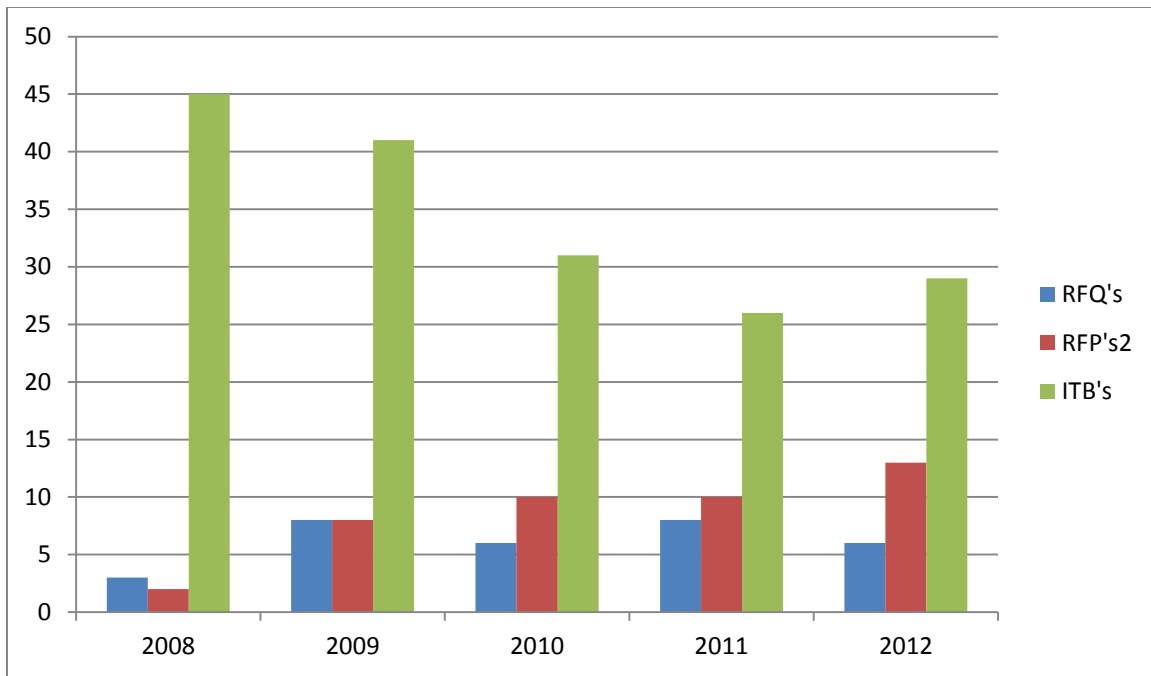
The Contracts Manager and Purchasing Manager review contracts to ensure a precise and clear scope of work, proper signature authority, proper terms and conditions, a justifiable purchase, funding availability, applicable insurance requirements and contract compliance with City purchasing policies and procedures. Once submitted to the Purchasing Office, contracts should be reviewed by the Contract Administrator or Contracts Manager for completeness within 4 hours and approved by the Purchasing Manager within one working day of receiving a complete submittal. All standard contracts are processed and approved within 24 hours of receipt of all required documentation. All standard Certificates of Insurance will be obtained and reviewed within 24 hours of receipt.

Additionally, for contracts approved by City Council, the PO should be entered and approved within 10 working days of City Council approval and receiving all required documentation and attachments from the department.

Purchasing manages contracts to ensure that services are performed under a valid contract. Purchasing Office has developed in conjunction with the City's online bidding software a contract management database, which stores all term contracts for the City. Notifications for term bids will be generated by the Contracts Manager to user departments 120 days in advance of any renewal with a re-bid required.

**Bid Process**-Purchasing provides management and oversight of the entire bidding process. This includes the coordination and preparation of advertising documents, review and posting of applicable bid documents to the on-line bidding portal or coordinating with the required consultant/engineer for posting, management of all questions and answers on every bid to ensure that all Q&A is addressed appropriately, opening of bidding documents, posting of all bid tabs to the Purchasing site for public viewing, coordination of any required evaluations and scheduling of such, review of certificates of insurance for compliance and review and management of any and all required bonds. In addition, Purchasing maintains the CIP bidding documents on SLIC and updates as needed for CIP staff.

Purchasing led RFP's and RFQ's have increased from an average of 1.5 per year from 2005 to 2008 to 16 per year in 2009 to current. These RFP's and RFQ's require additional time, effort and coordination in regards to coordinating of the evaluation team and score sheets, coordinating of the evaluation meetings and presentation by vendors. ITB's have decreased from an average of 43, between 2005 to 2009, to an average of 28 annually, due largely to the changes in the Local Government Code that raised the limit from \$25,000 to \$50,000 before a municipality had to formally bid.



Purchasing also works closely with the City Attorney's Office in maintaining standard contracts used by staff and manages the routing process for all City contracts. This includes contract review for required documentation, the routing of contracts for appropriate signatures, entering the requisition, processing the purchase order and monitoring the status and performance of contracts.

**Contract Routing Process**-The Purchasing Office reviews City contracts for compliance with federal, state, and local laws and the City's Purchasing Policies and Procedures.

The Purchasing Office (Purchasing Manager and Contracts Manager) is responsible for final review of all Surety Bonds and bond related issues. This includes, but is not limited to, bid bonds, payment bonds and performance bonds. Purchasing Manager reviews all claims against bonds and notifies proper personnel as necessary.

The Contract Administrator or Contracts Manager routes the contracts for final approval, the Buyer enter purchase requisitions once the contract has been executed, issues purchase orders, and electronically distributes POs to the departments. Purchasing also ensures that change orders are processed when required and that all necessary back-up documents are received.

The Purchasing Manager reviews and approves non-CIP contracts under \$15,000 after verifying that there are sufficient funds in the designated account.

The Purchasing Manager reviews and signs-off on all change orders in order to ensure compliance with federal, state and local laws and the City's Purchasing Policies and Procedures.

Currently, the Department is working on a strategic project with IT on developing a contract routing software for efficient and timely routing of contracts with signature capability.

FY 10		
Up to \$2,999.99	325	48.01%
\$3,000 - \$5,000	50	7.39%
\$5,000.01-\$10,000	74	10.93%
\$10,000.01 - \$15,000	62	9.16%
\$15,000.01 - \$20,000	24	3.55%
\$20,000.01 - \$25,000	20	2.95%
\$25,000.01 - \$30,000	11	1.62%
\$30,000.01 - \$35,000	2	0.30%
\$35,000.01 - \$40,000	5	0.74%
\$40,000.01 - \$45,000	7	1.03%
\$45,000.01 - \$50,000	18	2.66%
Over \$50,000	79	11.67%
	677	100.00%
Under \$25,000	555	81.98%
\$25,000 - \$50,000	43	6.35%
Over \$50,000	79	11.67%
	677	
CIP Contracts	167	

FY 11		
Up to \$2,999.99	180	30.98%
\$3,000 - \$5,000	73	12.56%
\$5,000.01-\$10,000	78	13.43%
\$10,000.01 - \$15,000	46	7.92%
\$15,000.01 - \$20,000	36	6.20%
\$20,000.01 - \$25,000	24	4.13%
\$25,000.01 - \$30,000	7	1.20%
\$30,000.01 - \$35,000	11	1.89%
\$35,000.01 - \$40,000	8	1.38%
\$40,000.01 - \$45,000	12	2.07%
\$45,000.01 - \$50,000	16	2.75%
Over \$50,000	90	15.49%
	581	100.00%
Under \$25,000	437	75.22%
\$25,000 - \$50,000	54	9.29%
Over \$50,000	90	15.49%
	581	
CIP Contracts	191	

FY 12		
Up to \$2,999.99	198	30.56%
\$3,000 - \$5,000	75	11.57%
\$5,000.01-\$10,000	92	14.20%
\$10,000.01 - \$15,000	48	7.41%
\$15,000.01 - \$20,000	45	6.94%
\$20,000.01 - \$25,000	26	4.01%
\$25,000.01 - \$30,000	13	2.01%
\$30,000.01 - \$35,000	7	1.08%
\$35,000.01 - \$40,000	11	1.70%
\$40,000.01 - \$45,000	17	2.62%
\$45,000.01 - \$50,000	20	3.09%
Over \$50,000	96	14.81%
	648	100.00%
Under \$25,000	484	74.69%
\$25,000 - \$50,000	68	10.49%
Over \$50,000	96	14.81%
	648	

**Risk Management-** Purchasing assists Risk Management in regards to Certificates of Insurance (COI) for all City contracts. Each COI is reviewed for proper levels of coverage pursuant to the City's policies and State Code. COI's are also checked for proper endorsements and dates. If issues arise on a COI it's escalated to Risk Management for resolution. Purchasing also handles all Bid Bonds, Performance Bonds and Payment Bonds which includes complete review on said bond, verification from surety of valid bond and ensures that performance and payment bonds are in accordance with contract requirements. Purchasing Manager serves as mediator when issues arise regarding performance and/or claims against a bond.

#### **Activity: Requisition and Purchase Order Processing**

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The Purchasing Office (Purchasing Manager and Purchasing Buyers) reviews purchase requisitions for compliance with state law and City policy prior to approval and checks for proper use of account numbers and available funding. This includes emergency purchases, single / sole source purchases and blanket POs.

Purchasing staff verifies that required backup documentation such as three quotes, HUB forms, contracts, and insurance certificates are attached prior to approving the purchase order. The objective is to send signed purchase orders to departments within one business day from the date the purchase requisition was approved by the originating department. Purchase orders are printed, reviewed and approved as needed, daily, and within 24 hours of receiving all required documentation.

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**Activity: P-Card Program Management**

The Purchasing Office is responsible for administering the P-Card Program. The Procurement Card Policy, PU 119 established guidelines for the distribution and use of the P-Cards.

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**Service: Surplus/Salvage City Auction Management**

The Purchasing Office (Buyer) coordinates with other departments to dispose of obsolete, surplus, salvage, abandoned, and confiscated property through an on-line public auction. Buyer works directly with Purchasing Manager and Public Surplus to resolve any issues and maintain consistency. Auctions will be posted for bidding within 48 hours from receipt from user department once all proper information has been received.

There are approximately 250-300 items auctioned annually. The items are posted for 14 days. If the items have not received any bids within the first 14 days, it will be re-posted once more. Once the items have been posted twice and not sold, the department is responsible for disposing of the items. If the unsold item is IT equipment, the equipment will need to be recycled rather than disposed of.

Once a bidder wins, the payment is processed through public surplus. The individual will then need to coordinate with the department to pick the item up and show proof of purchase by printing the receipt of payment.

Auctions Analysis		
	FY 2011	FY 2012
Total Auctions Posted	209	361
Total Funds Received	\$179,180	\$193,668

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**Service: Training and Education**

The Purchasing Office provides training on all aspects of purchasing – General Purchasing, PO Process, Contracting and P-Cards – to all levels of staff. Training is held for p-cards when new City Staff receives a p-card or as monthly audits determine the need. Training is done on other purchasing as needed due to change in legislation or policy. Information is also available through the city's SLIC page for employees and through the city's website for residents and vendors.

A vendor fair is also conducted approximately every 18 months or as needed to educate vendors on "how to do business with the city."

Staff holds customer service and accountability as top priorities. Purchasing is committed to working collaboratively with all departments and vendors and providing training and education on an on-going basis. Training is an intricate part of using and understanding the city's policies and procedures.

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**Service: Emergency Management/Logistics Section Chief**



Pursuant to the authority as provided in the Basic Plan of the Emergency Management Plan of the City of Sugar Land, Resource Management is assigned to the Purchasing Manager. The purpose of this annex is to provide guidance and outline procedures for efficiently obtaining, managing, allocating, and monitoring the use of resources during emergency situations or when such situations appear imminent. The Logistics Section Chief will be responsible for planning, organizing, and carrying out resource management activities during emergencies.

The Purchasing Manager is responsible for developing and maintaining Annex M. The line of succession for the Purchasing Manager is: (1). Purchasing Manager (2). Contracts Manager (3). Director of Collections and Procurement

## SERVICE LEVEL EXPECTATIONS

Program: PURCHASING	
Service (Activity)	Service Level Expectation
<b>Competitive Purchasing Oversight</b>	All required purchasing approval city agendas will be reviewed within 4 hours of notification from user department.
<i>Contract/Bid Oversight</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All standard contracts processed and approved within 24 hours of receipt of all required documentation.</li> <li>2. All City Council approved items processed within 24 hours of receipt of all required documentation.</li> <li>3. All standard Certificates of Insurance will be obtained and reviewed within 24 hours of receipt.</li> <li>4. All departments will receive notices of bid expiration of request for renewal 120 days prior to end date of contract.</li> <li>5. Purchasing will assist all departments with required evaluation procedures, processes, scoring and meetings when required by the RFP or RFQ.</li> <li>6. Purchasing will coordinate all advertisements, public notices and bid opening documentation and meetings.</li> <li>7. Purchasing will post all bid tabs the same day as the bid opening.</li> <li>8. Purchasing Manager will act as mediator in regards to any surety bond related issues.</li> </ol>
<i>Requisition and Purchase Order Processing</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All requisitions/purchase orders processed within 24 hours of receipt of all required documentation.</li> <li>2. Requests for new users and authority limits will be completed within 4 hours of receiving completed and approved forms.</li> </ol>

<i>P-Card Program Management</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. PU-119 establishes the guidelines set for the p-card program.</li> </ol>
<b>Surplus/Salvage City Auction Management</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Auctions will be posted for bidding within 48 hours from receipt from user department once all proper information has been received.</li> <li>2. Purchasing will work with department and Public Surplus to resolve any non-payment issues.</li> <li>3. Purchasing will coordinate with department any required disposal of equipment.</li> <li>4. Purchasing will provide on-site assistance, as needed, for departments wishing to dispose of equipment and seeking assistance in the process.</li> </ol>
<b>Training &amp; Education</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Purchasing staff will coordinate and train any new users on P-cards.</li> <li>2. Purchasing will assist with the purchasing related training for new employees.</li> <li>3. Purchasing will host a vendor fair approximately 18 months or as needed.</li> </ol>
<b>Emergency Management/Logistics Section Chief</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide guidance and outline procedures for efficiently obtaining, managing, allocating, and monitoring the use of resources during emergency situations or when such situations appear imminent.</li> <li>2. Review annexes M and supply EOC with needed updates.</li> <li>3. Attend training as needed.</li> </ol>

## TREASURY-5020

### PROGRAM SUMMARY

Treasury is the central office through which all banking, treasury management and related financial auxiliary services are provided to City departments and divisions with the exception of Municipal Court. Funds are held in approved depositories and invested in accordance with the City's Investment Policy and Investment Strategy.

Treasury is also responsible for billing and revenue collection services to both City utility customers and other City departments in order to provide excellent service to our citizens and accurately record and receipt revenues for the City.

The program operates to meet the City's mid-term priorities of Responsible City Government through Consistent Financial Policies; A Leader in Customer Service-Superior Service and Easy Access to City Government: Information and Services.

## SERVICES AND SERVICE LEVELS

### Service: Investments

The Treasury Manager, Chief Accountant, and Budget and Research Director are the investment officers for the City which monitor the City investments. The investment officers are required to take 10 hours of training every two years. The officers are responsible for investing the City's funds in accordance with the investment policy guidelines. (Investment Policy and Investment Strategy)

Each time an investment is made, matures, or interest is received a journal entry is prepared and entered into the general ledger. At the end of each month, the City investment reports are prepared for the financial statements. The financials are reviewed by Management. The Sugar Land 4A Corporation and Sugar Land 4B Corporation investment reports are prepared quarterly. The investment reports are reviewed and signed by the three investment officers. Every two years, the City will send out request for qualifications to obtain new broker/dealers. In accordance with the City Council Investment Policy (Resolution No. 11-33/Policy 5000-18), the city has six broker/dealers that they contract with to invest the City's funds.

### Service: Property Tax

Treasury coordinates with the Fort Bend County Tax Office for the billing and collection of the City's property tax. Treasury enters property tax payment information provided by the Fort Bend County on a weekly basis into the general ledger. The County wires the money into the City's bank disbursement account and provides Treasury a summary of payments collected for each tax year. Also, the contract is monitored on a monthly basis to monitor the collection percentage.

The Treasury Manager manages the property tax transactions from the Fort Bend Central Appraisal District and manages the tax rate adoption process including the truth in taxation process. Treasury works with the Budget and Research Department to ensure the tax information is accurate in the proposed and adopted budgets. The Treasury Manager serves as the Tax Assessor/Collector for the City and prepares the effective tax rate calculations and the required news articles to be published in the newspaper. Also, any public hearings or meetings set forth in the truth-in-taxation process are presented to City Council. The Treasury Manager also monitors the law suits that have been filed against the Central Appraisal District and reports the outstanding and settled cases to management.

### Service: Customer Service Coordination

Treasury staff responds to all walk in customers and telephone calls related to utility billing and payment inquiries, payment plans for delinquent utility bills prior to service being disconnected for non-payment, request for new services or to final services, disputes or information, hanger rental inquiries, solid waste inquires and miscellaneous calls.

Approximately 57, 000 telephone calls are received and walk-in customers are provided customer service annually. Also, customer correspondence is handled via mail or by e-mail. Established procedures and code information enable the logging of all utility telephone calls through Customer Information System with the use of existing software for identifying types of calls handled by Treasury. Customer telephone calls that require research, issuance of work orders to re-read meters or check for leaks are entered into the and tracked through Customer Information System work orders.

The Voice Response Unit (VRU) allows customers to have easy telephone access to account information 24 hours a day. The system directs customers to a menu of options including account information, payment history, billing amounts and history, and after-hour emergencies. The VRU also provides faxed copies of account information and history, and forms to initiate and cancel water service. Also, utility customers are able to pay their account by MasterCard, American Express or Visa credit cards using the telephone voice response system 24 hours a day 7 days a week.

Payments can be made in person, by phone using the automated phone system, on-line, at the drop box locations and electronic fund transfer for utility payments.

The Click2Gov Internet website allows customer 24 hours a day 7 days a week access to their utility account number. The system directs customers to a menu of options including account information, payment history, billing amounts and history, consumption history and the option to pay by MasterCard, American Express or Visa credit cards.

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### **Service: Billing**

Treasury bills for utilities, alarms, airport rentals, and other miscellaneous receivables for all city departments in an efficient and timely manner.

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### **Activity: Aviation Leases**

Treasury staff bills and collects the revenue for hangar rentals, office space, and other related airport services per lease contracts for approximately 110 accounts. Aviation leases are bill on a monthly basis for hangar rentals and land leases. Established procedures provide guidelines for work information flow between Airport and Treasury staff for billing and collection practices, and Fort Bend Central Appraisal record processes for tax roll purposes. Each January the Fort Bend Central Appraisal District is provided a current copy of the airplanes located at the airport as of January 1. The list helps determine which airplanes need to receive a property tax statement.

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### **Activity: Miscellaneous Receivable Billings**

Treasury provides billing and collection of miscellaneous fees to properly account for and record revenue to the general ledger monthly. Miscellaneous fees include streetlights and drainage fees, transportation fees, connection fees, and renewal of food/health permits, cobra and retirees insurance,

Little League ball field lighting electricity reimbursement, hazardous materials response calls, and numerous others.

### **Activity: Alarm Response Calls**

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In conjunction with the Police/Dispatch, Treasury staff bills residents for alarm response fees each month. Residents and commercial accounts are billed for alarm response calls. Residents and commercial establishments exceeding five (5) alarm responses in a calendar year are billed \$50 for each alarm response thereafter. Upon receiving a report from the police department, the billings are generated through accounts receivable software.

### **Activity: Utility Bills**

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Treasury bills for eighteen billing cycles each month. The cycles include approximately 28,000 utility accounts for water, wastewater, and solid waste services.

All utility bills are due 20 days from the mail date. The City's 20-day grace period is within the average that most utility companies generally use. Utility customers are offered the option of receiving an e-bill through the internet rather than a mailed paper bill. If payment is not received by the due date as noted on the bill, a 10% late fee with a maximum \$100 is assessed and a reminder notice is mailed approximately on the 23<sup>rd</sup> day. The intent of the reminder notices is to advise customers who have not received or have lost their bills that their account is past due; to notify customers who have mailed payments that their payment has not been received; to allow customers who are having financial difficulty the opportunity to seek utility assistance; and to provide the required legal notice that service will be terminated if payment is not received.

If payment is still not received within 10 days, a courtesy door tag is hung at the residence front door days before service is scheduled for termination by the Customer Service Technician, a contracted position. In addition to the contractor receiving a list of the cut-offs, the Water Utilities Department is faxed a list for the after hour reconnect calls.

Customers not responding to the courtesy tag have their water service disconnected for non-payment 30 days from the bill date.

The Water Utilities Department Technician places cut-off tags on the door notifying the customer the water service has been disconnected and turn off the water meter.

During the system billing of utility bills, exception reports are reviewed to ensure accurate bills are generated.

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### **Service: Centralized Collections**

The Treasury staff provides centralized collection of city funds for utility and other billings as well as cash receipts from other operating departments and receipts from outside including property tax payments received from the Fort Bend County Tax Office. The operating departments include the Regional Airport, Animal Services, Building Permits, City Secretary's Office, Fire Department, Police Department, and Public Works. Municipal Court and Parks and Recreation interfaces directly to the general ledger and they also prepare their money to be submitted via the armor car service. All reports and money from other departments are turned in to Treasury daily by 1:00 p.m. Treasury only enters the information into the AS400 to post to the general ledger on a daily basis. Receipts are posted into HTE's Cash Receipting system which is interfaced with HTE's financial reporting system. The daily reports are reviewed for proper recording and reconciliation to the general ledger. Treasury prepares the bank deposit and submits daily to the bank via armor car service.

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### **Activity: Delinquent Collection Agency**

Treasury provides centralized collection of daily funds for utility and other billings as well as daily receipts accurately and timely.

The City has executed a contract with McMeary, Veselka, Bragg, & Allen Attorneys at Law Collection (MVBA) to assist in collecting delinquent accounts receivable. The delinquent accounts receivable will include but not limited to delinquent utility bills, alarms calls, airport hangar rental accounts, health permits and CIP billings.

MVBA is the same firm that Municipal Court is currently using for their outstanding balances.

Treasury will coordinate with McMeary Veselka Bragg & Allen Attorneys at Law Collection agency on any accounts receivable that are 60 days due on collecting the balance. Treasury will notify all customers before the account will be turned over to the collection agency.

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### **Activity: Aviation Leases**

All airport accounts are monitored for payment, as non-payment requires a collection process that includes collection letters, and ultimately may include an eviction process involving the Legal Department.

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### **Activity: Miscellaneous Receivable Payments**

Treasury monitors the aging of miscellaneous receivables, mails delinquent notices, and takes appropriate action as required to collect the revenues.

### **Activity: Alarm Response Calls**

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All alarms accounts are monitored for payments, as non-payment of alarm fees required a collection process that includes collection letters.

### **Activity: Utility Payments**

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Billings, reminder notices, courtesy tags, and cut-off tags are all part of an effective billing system designed to meet legal requirements, while at the same time minimize the number of delinquent accounts.

The City offers numerous payment methods to assist customers in making payments on a timely basis. Staff processes payments received from customers paying by mail, in person, and payments deposited at the six payment depositories located throughout the city. The Automatic Payment Plan (automatic bank draft) is also available to customers. Upon customer request, staff enrolls customers in Automatic Payment following receipt of bank information, and processes bank draft. Payments are drafted the Friday before the due date indicated on the customer's water bill. Customers are also offered the option of paying their water bill via the internet and the phone using MasterCard, American Express or Visa credit cards. These credit card payments are processed and posted daily.

## SERVICE LEVEL EXPECTATIONS

Program: TREASURY	
Service (Activity)	Service Level Expectation
<b>Investments</b>	Invest the City's funds in accordance with the investment policy guidelines.
<b>Property Tax</b>	Coordinate with the Fort Bend County for billing and collection of the City's property tax. Assure that the billing and payments generated by the County are correct. Also, that the monitor the percentage of collections to make meets the standards of the City.
<b>Customer Service Coordination</b>	Answer the phone promptly and acknowledge customers promptly when entering Treasury. Offer assistance to customers by offering payment arrangements for the different payments.
<b>Billing</b>	Treasury bills for utilities, alarms, airport rentals, and other misc. receivables for all city departments in an efficient and timely manner.
<i>Aviation Leases</i>	Bill for hangar rentals, office space, and other related airport services per lease contracts monthly.
<i>Miscellaneous Receivable Billings</i>	Bill for any other miscellaneous receivables for the City that other departments might need to collect for.
<i>Alarm Response Calls</i>	In conjunction with the Police/Dispatch, Treasury staff bills for alarm response fees each month after the customer has met their first five responses at no charge.
<i>Utility Bills</i>	All bills reflect appropriate charges based on currently established rates.
<b>Centralized Collections</b>	Provide centralized collection of city funds for utility and other billings as well as cash receipts from other operating departments and receipts from outside including property tax payments received from the Fort Bend County Tax Office. The operating departments include the Regional Airport, Animal Services, Building Permits, City Secretary's Office, Fire Department, Police Department, and Public Works.
<i>Delinquent Collection Agency</i>	Treasury to coordinate with the collection agency on any accounts receivables that are past 60 days due on collecting the balance. Treasury will notify the customers by sending out two letters notifying them of the delinquency and to set up a payment arrangement if needed.
<i>Utility Payments</i>	Offer various payment options. Send out two notices to customers before turning over to the collection agency.
<i>Miscellaneous Receivable Payments</i>	Maintain a high collection ratio, send out two notices to customers before turning over to the collection agency
<i>Aviation Leases</i>	Maintain a high collection ratio, send out two notices to customers before turning over to the collection agency
<i>Alarm Response Calls</i>	Maintain a high collection ratio, send out two notices to customers before turning over to the collection agency